

# Ajahn Chah - Dedication - Forest Sangha



*"yo dhammam desesi ādikalyāṇaṃ, majjhekalyāṇaṃ, pariyosānakalyāṇaṃ"*

"The Buddha has pointed out the way: excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end."

Each morning in Theravāda Buddhist monasteries around the world, the above stanza is chanted as part of 'The Homage to the Triple Gem'. The teaching example of the late meditation master, Venerable Ajahn Chah, or Luang Por as his disciples called him, displayed this quality of being.

'Excellent in the beginning', in Ajahn Chah's case, was his commitment to the life of a renunciant monk (*dhutaṅga bhikkhu*). He cultivated impeccable discipline and displayed consistent, daring effort to confront all situations, especially those from which he was inclined to turn away. He gave himself completely to the training and eventually the Way became clear.

'Excellent in the middle' was the selfless sharing of his realization with all who came to be near him. Regardless of personal discomfort, he ceaselessly offered his body, speech and mind to assist his disciples, lay and ordained alike, to enter the Way. He said of his own teaching method, that it is the example that counts - not just the words. Those who were able to spend time with him know full well that this is so.

And 'excellent in the end' is that which remains. It is a radiant confidence of heart for thousands of individuals who now walk the way; that verified faith which profoundly expresses *dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi* - 'I go for refuge to the Truth of the Way Things Are.' Without having witnessed such an example of the Way being lived, this awakening of confidence might not have happened. Hence it is said, 'No gift excels the gift of Dhamma.'